

## Edmund Pendleton Gaines to Andrew Jackson, July 10, 1817, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

### BRIGADIER-GENERAL EDMUND P. GAINES TO JACKSON.

Camp Montgomery, July 10, 1817.

*General*, I have the honor to lay before you a letter (inclosure no. 1) which I the day before yesterday received from the Chattahoochie, purporting to be the answer of the Seminola chief, *Chapp,a,chi,mic,o*, of Mickasukee, the Major Dinkins' proposition to attend a conference for the purpose of securing the murderers of our citizens. The chief, as was to be expected, appears to have taken the advice of the man who calls himself A. Arbuthnot,<sup>1</sup> whose letter I transmitted to you in the begining of april last, as the handwriting of the two appears to be the same.

<sup>1</sup> The following power of attorney to Arbuthnot is among the Jackson MSS.: "A toutes Ceus qui appartiendra, Scai, Que nous les Chefs de la Nation Creek, qui ont signé le present pouvoir, Ayant plein foi et Confiance en Alexr. Arbuthnott de la Nouvelle Providence, qui ayant connaissance de tous nos Talks, et etant pleinement informé de tous notres intentions et soihates, Par le present, lui le dite Alexander Arbuthnott, constitue et autorise, d'agire pour Nous Comme notre *Attorney* ou Agent, dans tous les affaires qui Concerne la Nation Creek, d'ecrire telles papiers ou lettres qui lui paraitroient pour notres service ou celle de notre Nation. Donner a Okolokne Sound le 17 Juin 1817." The original is given, in English, in *Am. St. Papers, For. Rel.*, IV. 589.

Arbuthnot was misguided by zeal, mixed, no doubt, with a sense of business advantage. He shared Col. Edward Nicholls's idea that the Creeks were mistreated; and he held

## Library of Congress

that by the treaty of Ghent their lands, ceded in the treaty of Fort Jackson, should be restored to them. He held out hope to them that the King of England would see that justice was done to them. By taking their part in this general way he encouraged their discontent and made them more daring in opposition to the whites. He sent various letters to Colonel Hawkins protesting in behalf of the Indians. Perhaps his most inept action was the following letter "to the officer commanding at Fort Gaines", Mar. 3, 1817, in which he became the champion of Peter McQueen, one of the most hated of the hostiles:

" *Sir* I am desired by Peter M'Queen an unfortunate Indian Chief who was some years since obliged to fly from his Town of Tucky Batché on the Tallaposhatché River, to claim of your friendship, the delivery of a Negro Man named Joe (taken away from him since the Peace) which he states to be in fort Gaines: When McQueen left Tucky Batche, his property was considerable both in negroes and cattle; of the former, Ten grown Negroes were taken by a half breed man named Barney, nine of which he learns were sold, and one a Girl, is still in possession of said Barney: Twenty able negroes were taken by a Chief named Colonel, *or* Auchi Hatcho, who acts also as an Interpreter; and as he never had possession of any of those persons property, nor ever did the man injury to his knowledge; he claims a farther proof of your friendship, that you will use your influence in procuring those Negroes for him; and, should they be given up by the persons holding them, there is one faithful Negroe among them, named Charle who will bring them to him at Okolokne River,

"The American head men and officers that were accustomed to live near him, can testify to his civility and good fellowship with them, and there are none of them, he is convinced that would not serve him, if in their power; As he owes nothing, nor ever took any persons property, *none* have a right to retain his, and he hopes that through your influence, those persons now holding his Negroes, will be induced to give them up. While I am thus advocating the cause of one unfortunate Individual allow me to claim an extension of your

## Library of Congress

philanthropy to all the Indians within your circle, by your representing to them the folly of their quarrels, and that they ought to live quietly and peaceably with each other.

“The lower Creeks seem to wish to live peaceably and quietly and in good friendship with the others; but there are some designing and evil minded persons, self Interested; who are endeavouring to create quarrels and make disturbance between the lower and upper Creek Indians contrary to their happiness, their interest and welfare; Such people belong to *no* nation and ought not to be countenanced by any Government

“The Head Chiefs request I will enquire of you, why American settlers are descending the Chattahouchy driving the poor Indian from his habitation and taking possession of his home and cultivated fields: Without authority I can claim nothing of you, but a humane and philanthropic principle guiding me, I hope the same will influence you; and if such is really the case; and that the line marked out by the Treaty of Peace between Great Britain and the United States, respecting *the Indian Nations* has been infringed upon by any of the subjects of the latter; that You will represent to them their improper Conduct, and prevent its continuance.

“I hold in my possession a letter received from the Governor of New providence addressed to him by His Britanic Majestys Chief Secretary of State, informing him of the Orders given to the British Ambassador at Washington, to watch over the Interests of the Indian Nations, and see that their Rights are faithfully attended to and protected agreeable to the Treaty of Peace made between the British and Americans. I am in hopes that ere this there is arrived at Newprovidence, a person from Great Britain, with authority to act as Agent for the Indian nations, and if so, it will devolve to him to see that the boundary lines, as marked out by the Treaty, are not infringed upon I hope you will not think these observations, *made by desire of the Chiefs*, any improper interference, And requesting the favor of An Answer. . . . “P. S. McQueen states that the ofspring of the Negroes when he left Tucky Batche were Seven of those taken by Barney and Nine of those taken by Auchi Hatcho and he supposes they have increased.”

## Library of Congress

This British agent then, it seems, may be considered as the prime director on the part of the seminola Indians in the adjustment of our affairs! and will I doubt not, deal out *words of peace and friendship* in abundance, and thereby endeavor to put off the dreaded hour of just retribution. But should I receive from Major Dinkins no satisfactory assurance of a determination on the part of the chiefs to comply with the demand you have authorised me to make, I shall then try the effect of force. . . .